

It's Smart To Be Gallery Wise!

THE WILLIAM ROCKHILL NELSON GALLERY OF ART
AND ATKINS MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

N E W S F L A S H E S

May 1 - 31, 1 9 3 6

CHINESE ART: For the month of May, the central loan gallery will be occupied by the group of Chinese objects which were lent to the Burlington House Exhibition in London, and which have just been returned to the Gallery.

The interest in this group was so general, the astonishment that so important a series could come from so young a museum was so great, and the comment was so universally of superlatives, that we are very proud to exhibit them en masse. Some of the objects will be seen for the first time, particularly the two sides of a Stone Sarcophagus dating from about 525 A. D., and decorated in engraved scenes of filial piety. It would seem that it is the coffin of the Lady Yuan, and the funerary epitaph which goes with it is in the Boston Museum.

Certainly interest will center in the superb Light Yellow Jade Pi, which was one of the outstanding objects of the entire exhibition, and of which Dame Una Pope-Hennessy so enthusiastically wrote "From Kansas City has been sent what may perhaps be regarded as the most beautiful early jade in the Exhibition.... On account of its design and workmanship, it must strike all observers as one of the noblest works of art that has ever come out of the loess of China".

Featured also will be the great Banister Vase of T'zu Chou type ware, the most important example of this Sung pottery that has ever been found. The white body is ornamented with a single superb dragon painted in brown and almost unique is the signature of the maker on one of the petals of the floral scroll work at the foot.

Two of our very fine scroll paintings were sent, and they received universal commendation. One of them, attributed to the great Sung master, Hsia Kuei, brought forth flattering praise from Ludwig Bachhofer in a recent article in Parnassus, in which he states that it is unquestionably an original by this greatest master of Chinese landscapes.

Another unique piece is the olive-green Jar with lid, which was the earliest example of glazed pottery in the exhibition.

The several fine bronzes, delicate gold pieces, early Tomb Figures in wood, the impressive Bodhisattva from T'ien Lung Shan and other important examples of jade will all be shown through the month of May.

LACE: Last summer a comprehensive group of laces from our permanent collection was shown. The exhibition was so popular that it is being repeated for the month of May, as many people were out of town during its earlier installation.

The very suggestion of lace conjures romantic thoughts. Hardly a treasure chest exists today that does not have a fragile, yellowed wisp of lace that is associated with memories of the past. It may be only a handkerchief, or a bridal veil, but if it is real lace, that is made by hand, we cherish it not only for its associations, but because of its delicate, intrinsic beauty and its intricate, painstaking craftsmanship.

The Gallery is fortunate in possessing an outstanding collection of laces, from the early reticello type that was developed in Italy in the sixteenth century, to the latest nineteenth century examples of hand made lace which were executed in the royal schools of Italy, and which are marvels of complex, cobwebby patterns.

Perhaps the finest individual piece in the group is the Flemish Point D'Angleterre flounce which was made for the marriage of the Hapsburg Emperor Charles VI to Elizabeth of Brunswick, in 1715.

The crown of the Emperor, the Hapsburg eagle, and the intertwined monogram of the bride and groom are all included in the delicate bobbin work.

Another historic piece is a length of altar lace which was given by the court of Spain as a gift to the Pope Leo XIII in the early 18th century. A fine example of the lacemaker's art of that country, it was later returned to Spain.

PRINTS OF WAR: One of the outstanding exhibitions of prints held this past season in New York was the group of lithographs entitled "The Tragedy of War" by Kerr Eby, the American graphic artist. Under the auspices of The Print Club of Kansas City, these lithographs and a large crayon drawing "Nature's Phenomenon" will be shown in Gallery XIX during May.

The show aroused much comment and controversy. In speaking of his prints Eby says "I make no comment, save that they were made from the indelible impressions of war. They are not imaginary. I saw them." That they are real, brutal, even cruel, everyone will agree. They are the most serious accusation of war since the pencil of Forain was stilled.

Eby has something to say; he has said it without bombast, also without mercy. Everyone will be interested in his message and for many it will lead to serious thinking.

VAN GOGH EXHIBITION: Although it does not open until the middle of June, it is not too early to plan to spend all of one's spare moments at the Gallery while the great Van Gogh Show is here. The most successful and the most widely attended exhibition since the Armory Show in 1913, Kansas City is fortunate to have an opportunity to see it.

All the great paintings and drawings from the Kröller-Müller Foundation will be shown, and this number includes his outstanding works.

Special lectures will be held while the paintings are on view, many excursions are already planned from neighboring districts, and everyone will have an opportunity to become acquainted with the work of the most discussed artist of the day.

MASTERPIECES: The first graphic art of the Far East to be known in Europe, Japanese Prints have probably had more influence on European artists and have aroused more general interest in the Orient than any other form of Asiatic Art. They are an ideal introduction to the art of the Far East because of their fine tradition of drawing and craftsmanship and their popular and appealing subject matter.

The Gallery has a large collection of these "records of the transient scene", and a set of five by the 18th century artist, Shunsho, depicting five male actors from the popular Nakamura Theatre, will be featured as the Masterpiece for the Week of May 3rd.

Mr. Sickman's lecture on Wednesday evening, May 6th will be devoted to the history of Japanese Prints and will be illustrated by examples from the 17th to the 19th century, in the permanent collection. Far more intricate than the Western woodcut or chiaroscuro, their background and their development is a fascinating story.

Chinoiserie is that altogether delightful and charming contribution from Cathay to the rococo age of Europe. The Western imagination had long been fired by the tales of such travelers as Marco Polo and Montecorvino which described the wonders and magnificence to be found at the court of the Grand Khan in far off China. When the trade of the 17th and 18th centuries brought Chinese silks, porcelains and lacquers into Europe, they found immediate favor with the light and extravagant spirit of the times. This Chinoiserie or the "Chinese Manner" may be found recurring again and again in our own collection, in the Queen Anne Lacquer Cabinet and the Three-back Settee in the Georgian Room, in the Boiserie, the gilt bronze sconces and the console table in the Regence Room, or the rocks and flowers in brilliant enamel in the Chinese style on the salt glaze pitcher in the Burnap Collection.

This entirely frivolous and exotic style which was at once

imitative and original and which flourished all over Europe in the 18th century, will be the subject of Mr. Sickman's lecture on Wednesday evening, May 18th, and the Masterpiece for the week of the 10th will be the superb Queen Anne Lacquer Chest which is one of the finest evidences of the adoption of this manner by England and its cabinet-makers.

One of the most romantic stories in the history of art is the great kingdom and culture of Cambodia which grew up in the eighth century, only to be laid waste by the end of the thirteenth century. Lost in the jungle of the tropical jungle, the superb temple of Angkor Wat, the most magnificent monument of Khmer architecture, was rediscovered for the European world in the 19th century by the French. This art is of especial interest to us as we have an exceptionally fine example of the rare Pre-Khmer art in our standing figure and a supremely beautiful head of a Bodhisattva from the classical period of the 11th to 12th centuries, both on exhibition in the Persian gallery.

More intimately connected with Angkor Wat is the figure of Buddha in contemplation on the Naga Muchilinda of the 12th or 13th century which was recovered from the ruins of the temple. It will be featured as the Masterpiece of the week of May 24th, and the story of this civilisation will be the subject of Mr. Sickman's lecture in the Atkins Auditorium on Wednesday evening, May 27th.

One of the most universal fields in collecting is that of old silver. No other has so great an appeal, so general a use even today. Everyone who has ever been to London has succumbed to the lure of the Calcedonian Market and has come away with delicate salt shells and spoons, chaste Georgian tea caddies or classical vase-shoes muffineers. We check the date letters and the hall-marks and wonder that they have survived so long. Some of us are less wary and are taken in. This history of English and continental silver, the distinguishing marks and how we may know them, will be the subject of Miss Hughes' lecture on Wednesday evening, May 20th. In connection with this most interesting event, the Masterpiece of the week of May 17th will be a group of silver from the very fine Collection of Decorative Arts that came to the Gallery recently in the Mrs. William H. Chapman bequest. Included will be a pear-shaped coffee pot made by Hester Bateman in 1779, an Irish dish or potato ring, and a pair of lovely classic covered compotes of Austrian make.

ENGLISH POTTERY: Through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. F. P. Burnap, there is being shown in Gallery XVIII a large and comprehensive group of English Pottery Teapots. From the distinguished Burnap Collection, it comprises all the familiar manufactories, in their beautiful colourings and interesting shapes.

VOTING CONTEST: In the recent popularity voting contest between the American and French paintings on exhibition in the loan galleries, the results were interesting. Twice as many voted for the French Section, and the favorite artist was Renoir. Of his paintings, the superb Gabrielle won first place, with his "Roses in a Crystal Vase" and the "Portrait of a Girl in a Striped Dress" close runners-up.

It was surprising how many voted for the hitherto little seen Modigliani, and some even liked the amorphous Sur-realist "Head" of Picasso. Several saw the subtle humour and the provocative satire of the same artist's "At the Races", and voted for it.

In the American section, "Repose" by Miriam Tindall Smith was the first choice, with Jerry Farnsworth's "Eve and Eleanor", Clarence Carter's "Riderless Horses" and Thomas Hart Benton's "Romance" competing for second place.

PRINT CLUB: The final meeting of the Print Club of Kansas City for this season will be held at eight o'clock in the Atkins Auditorium on May 11th. The President, Robert E. Fizzell, will give an illustrated lecture on modern prints and his talk will be followed by an informal discussion of the prints which will be brought to the Auditorium.

All members and those interested in joining are urged to attend this last meeting when plans will be outlined for the fall.

JAPANESE ART: A group of Japanese objects from the Mrs. Jacob Leander Loose Collection has been installed in Gallery XXIV in connection with the exhibition of Japanese Prints. Some of the outstanding examples of jewelry from the same Collection are now on view in the East Corridor.

SUNDAY CONCERTS: The final concert for this season by Tau Chapter of Sigma Alpha Iota will be presented on Sunday, May 17th, at three-thirty in the Atkins Auditorium. The program will be an especially interesting and varied one, featuring again the string and voice ensemble which was heard in one of the earlier concerts.

These programs have been a distinct addition to the Gallery's winter activities and we feel sure that our visitors will join us in an expression of appreciation to the members of the society.

FRIENDS OF ART: The May meetings of the study class of the Friends of Art will be held on Thursday the seventh and the twenty-first in the Library at 11:15 A.M.

At the first session, four young American painters, Doris Lee, David McCosh, Joe Jones and Nikolai Cikovski will be discussed. Each one has held a one-man show in New York this past season and many interesting comments were made on their newest canvases.

The Director is spending several days in New York this month in connection with the Museum Directors' convention, and the meeting of May 21st will be devoted to discussing the newest exhibitions now current there.

All members of the Society are urged to attend these interesting and instructive discussions.

SUMMER CLASSES FOR CHILDREN: Enrollment for the summer classes for children will begin on June 2nd and continue until the groups are filled. As the total enrollment will be limited to two hundred children, those who are interested are advised to register as early as possible. The term will begin on Saturday, June 13th, and will continue through July 30th, meeting each Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings from ten until twelve. The registration fee, which is necessitated by the fact that part of the classes occur on pay days at the Gallery, will be one dollar for the twenty classes.

GIFT OF PRINTS: Through the generosity of Mr. John Henry Smith of Kansas City, the Gallery print collection has been augmented by four fine etchings by contemporary American artists. These prints, by Arthur William Heintzelman, Louis Rosenberg, Robert Lawson, and Childs Hassam, are from a series of scenes of Colonial America and are a most welcome addition to the Gallery's group of contemporary etchings.

KANSAS UNIVERSITY: The Director will go to Lawrence on Wednesday, May 6th, to give the Convocation Address on Fine Arts Day. The subject of his talk will be "The Artist Sees Differently".

CALENDAR FOR MAY

Tues., May 5,	2:00	- Japanese Prints	Mr. Sickman
Wed., " 6,	3:00	- Near Eastern Art	Miss Hughes
	8:00	- Japanese Wood Block Prints	Mr. Sickman
Thurs., " 7,	11:15	- Friends of Art Discussion Group	Mr. Gardner
	2:00	- Chinese Sculpture and Temple	Mr. Sickman
Fri., " 8,	2:00	- Italian Painting	Mr. Freeman
Sat., " 9,	2:00	- Radio Talk - W9XBY	
Mon., " 11,	8:00	- Meeting of the Print Club in Atkins Auditorium	
Tues., " 12,	2:00	- Queen Anne Lacquer Cabinet	Mr. Freeman
Wed., " 13,	2:00	- Dutch, Flemish, German Painting	Mr. Freeman
	8:00	- Chinoiserie	Mr. Sickman
Thurs., " 14,	2:00	- Chinese Ceramics	Mr. Sickman
Fri., " 15,	2:00	- The American Wing and American Painting	Miss Jackson
Sat., " 16,	2:00	- Radio Talk - W9XBY	
Sun., " 17,	3:30	- Concert by Tau Chapter of Sigma Alpha Iota	
Tues., " 19,	2:00	- Continental Silver	Miss Hughes
Wed., " 20,	2:00	- The American Indian	Miss Hughes
	8:00	- English and Continental Silver	Miss Hughes
Thurs., " 21	11:15	- Friends of Art Discussion Group	Mr. Gardner
	2:00	- Japanese Art	Mr. Sickman
Fri., " 22,	2:00	- English and French Painting	Mr. Wittmann

Calendar for May (continued)

Sat., May 23,	2:00	- Radio Talk - W9XEY	
Tues., "	26,	2:00 - Cambodian Buddha	- Mr. Sickman
Wed., "	27,	2:00 - Classical Art	- Mr. Freeman
		2:00 - Ankor Wat	- Mr. Sickman
Thurs., "	28,	2:00 - Chinese Bronzes and Painting	- Mr. Sickman
Fri., "	29,	2:00 - Prints	- Mr. Wittmann
Sat., "	30,	2:00 - Radio Talk - W9XEY	

To assist us in keeping our mailing list up to date - and to insure receipt of your copy - we would appreciate notification of any change of address, as these NEWS FLASHES are not forwarded by the post-office.

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